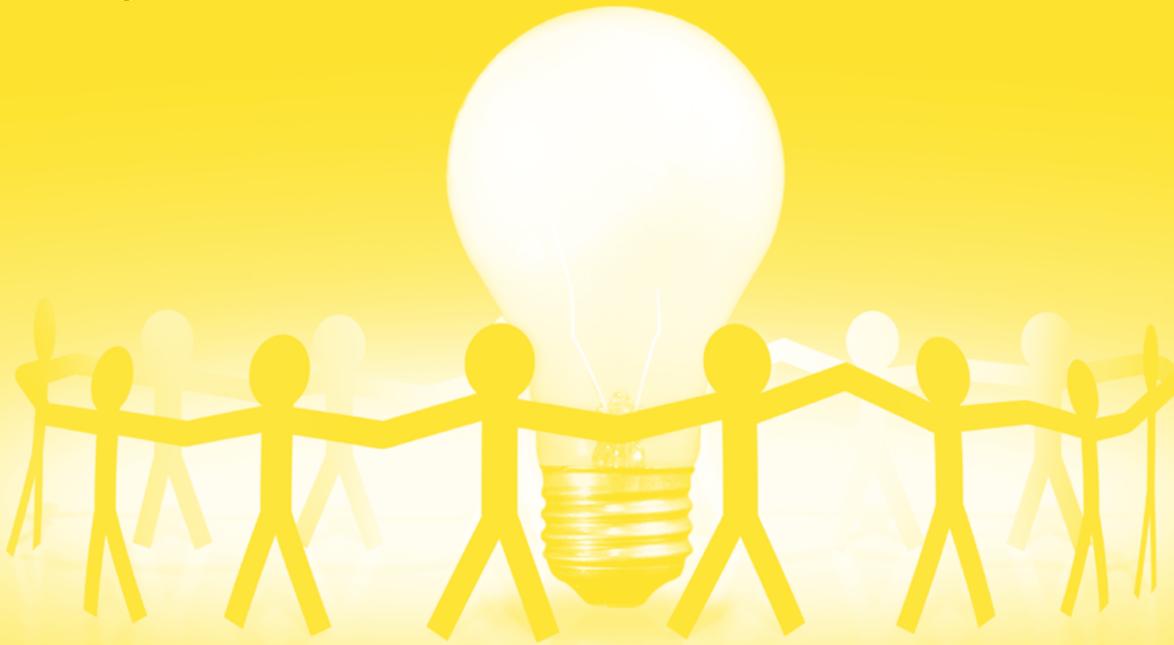


# United Way of the Southern Tier

“Fun” Raising Guide



*Bright Ideas*

*... a resource for themes, ideas  
& special events for your  
workplace campaign.*



United Way  
of the Southern Tier

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## Introduction

While special events are not intended to replace employee presentations where individuals are educated about giving to United Way, they are a great way to promote the campaign, spark involvement, encourage team building and **have FUN!**

Successful giving campaigns have two things in common: planning and participation. Ask yourself these questions before your event.

- What are your organization's goals for giving?
- What do you hope to accomplish through the special event?
- What non-monetary goals do you have?
  - Creating greater community understanding
  - Increasing volunteerism
  - Building morale
- What resources are available to you?
  - People
  - Materials
  - Incentives
  - Entertainment
  - Location
  - Inspiration
- How will you publicize your campaign?
  - Morning announcements with upbeat music
  - E-mail messages listing upcoming United Way schedule of events
  - Newsletter articles highlighting United Way partner agencies
  - Voice mail messages
  - Posters and banners hung in high traffic areas

Remember, strong leadership set the pace. Ask your company leaders to send a memo or e-mail encouraging involvement and participation in your campaign activities.

## Keep your co-workers updated....

### sample e-mail messages

- Did you know? When you give to United Way of the Southern Tier, your money goes far, but not far away. Your donation is invested right here in your community in 111 on-going programs, in collaboration with 70 partner agencies.
  - United Way is your partner in finding solutions to Chemung and Steuben county's most critical issues. They add value to the work of member agencies and other community partners by making an impact which is beyond the capacity of any single person or entity acting alone.
  - Doesn't it feel good to know that you made a difference in just one person's life? Through United Way you'll improve the lives of hundreds of people each week, 365 days a year.
  - United Way is the most powerful way to give to your community by bringing together the resources of donors, businesses, schools, government, non-profit organizations... In essence, the entire community.
  - Payroll deduction makes it easy for you to help change the lives by making an affordable deduction from each paycheck. Please give to United Way of the Southern Tier.
  - United Way works to create lasting change in community conditions. They measure results not by how much money they raise, but by the impact they make on changing lives and shaping communities. Please help make an impact in your community by giving to United Way.
  - Need help, but don't know where to turn? 2-1-1 is the answer! Now, by dialing this easy-to-remember, three-digit number, the Southern Tier has a simple, but critical connection between individuals who need help and the programs that provide help.
  - What we collectively accomplish in one year with our gifts to United Way is more than any one person could accomplish in a lifetime toward achieving a healthier, stronger community.
  - There will never be a way to eliminate tragedy, but when you partner with United Way, you can soften the pain. With crisis counseling, emergency assistance, and 2-1-1 that link people to help, we can help neighbors in need.
-

## Give United Way year-round presence at your organization

While the United Way Community Campaign comes to you once a year, with one request, there are numerous year-round opportunities to connect with donors and to help them understand that their contributions are at work 365 days a year, creating impact and results you can see.

Here are some ideas.

- Include a United Way pledge opportunity in your new hire orientation packet.
- Hold a business meeting at a United Way supported agency. (see your Community Campaign Director)
- Have a United way “info” moment at employee gatherings or staff meetings.
- Provide a link your employee website to the United Way website, [www.uwst.org](http://www.uwst.org)
- Put articles about United Way and/or its member agencies in your company newsletter so everyone can see their dollars at work.
- Celebrate the volunteerism of your employees with short profiles or a special bulletin board.
- Use payroll stuffers, posters, and newsletters to share United Way news.
- Create year-round fundraising events that are fun for your organization.
- Encourage co-workers to join a Community Solutions Impact Team to see first hand how United Way uses their donations in the community.
- Encourage key campaign volunteers to attend the United Way events. (Kick-off held in September, Awards Breakfast, Annual Dinner, Day of Caring etc.)

Encourage Employees to Volunteer as a Group

- Adopt a route for home-delivered meals, or serve meals at community kitchen for a month.
- Collect items for or distribute food at a local food pantry to help families in need.
- Do light house or yard work for the frail elderly, helping them to maintain their independence.
- Serve as mentors for young people that need a positive influence in their life.
- Help identify and meet community needs as a United Way impact team volunteer.

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### ***Make People Feel Special***

- *Place a surprise at everyone’s workspace.*
  - *Give balloons/pins to donors*
  - *Create a special club for donors and volunteers*
  - *Hold a “recognition event”*
  - *Provide free beverages for employees*
  - *Create special certificates to honor donors.*
-

## Using Themes

Themes are a great way to generate interest and make the campaign fun. Start by jotting down a list for possible themes. Here are some examples of popular themed events.

### Tune into the Community

Music is a great way to get everyone moving to the United Way beat.

- Hold a “Karaoke Kick-Off” Party
- Sell employees old CDs
- Hold a musical show
- Have participants dress up as their favorite musicians

### Lights! Camera! Action!

Have employees dress up as their favorite characters from movies or TV

- Act out a plot that involves United Way
- Incorporate movie lines into flyers and e-mails
- Create “skits” using your favorite movies or TV shows with a United Way theme

### Be an Everyday Superhero

Employees dress as superheroes: Batman, Superman, etc.

- Serve hero (sub) sandwiches

### Be a Lifesaver

Have some fun, beach style! Sand, sunglasses, beach balls, and Beach Boys music make your office feel like a day at the beach.

- Hand out Lifesaver candies
- Employees who donate are given life preserver vests to wear at a meeting

OR

- Wrap a sticker around a roll of lifesavers and write, “I am a lifesaver, I gave today.” Give to each person who turns in their pledge card.
- Continue the theme throughout the campaign by providing facts and real life stories about people who have been helped by the “lifesavers” in our community.

### Back to School

Relive the glory years of school

- Collect school supplies for a United Way partner agency
  - Hold a spelling bee with managers vs. employees
  - E-mail United Way “pop quizzes”
  - Hold a pep-rally where departments create a United Way cheer
-

### Mardi Gras

Everyone loves a party, so why not model your campaign after the biggest party in the world- Mardi Gras?

- Invite a jazz band to play at your kick-off event
- Hold a parade float contest where departments decorate shoeboxes as floats
- Hand out beads to donors
- Host a Cajun potluck

### Sports Theme

Create a sports theme to coincide with football, basketball, or baseball season.

- Have departments create their own teams with a team name and colors
- Hold a tailgate party in the parking lot-serve hot dogs, chips, and soda
- “Kick in Your Share” for football or soccer theme
- “Hit a Homerun for your Community” for baseball theme

### County Fair/Carnival

Hold a carnival or fair to kick off your campaign

- Have traditional carnival games such as ring toss, duck races, etc.
- Serve popcorn, peanuts, cotton candy, and hotdogs
- Have an executive volunteer for a dunk tank or pie toss
- Hold a bake contest and cake walk

### Western Theme

Have some fun “Western Style”

- Hold a barbeque and serve hamburgers, baked beans, and corn on the cob
- Dress like a cowboy or your favorite western hero
- Hold a kick-off rodeo

### Mystery Game

Employees receive passwords into the game upon returning pledge cards. Once in the game, players receive clues by answering education questions about United Way. There is a prize for the winner.

### Victory Circle

Start your engines!! NASCAR or racing theme.

- Have managers dress up as NASCAR drivers and enter your kick-off event on scooters.
- Management can then race scooters over the lunch hour in the parking lot.
- You could also use the same event but replace the scooters with tricycles.
- Give employees pit passes and NASCAR merchandise.
- Have employees vote for their favorite to win.

## “Fun” Raising Ideas from A-Z

### A Dollar-An-Inch Contest



- Executives participate in an all day competition to end the day with the shortest tie.
- Employees cut an inch off their favorite executive’s tie each time they give to the community.
- Give prizes for the shortest tie, the ugliest tie, etc.

### Auction Hotline

Set up a special voice mailbox with weekly messages announcing auction items. Outline the terms, including their face value in a flyer. Employees call the hotline to record their bids.

- Update the recorded message daily, announcing the highest bids received to date.
- Each Friday, announce auction results for the week and next week’s items.
- Ask employees to donate items or services for the auction.

### Baby Picture Match Game



Invite employees to try their luck at matching baby and/or pet pictures. Award the entry with the most correct answers for a prize or some other fun incentive. Charge employees per ballot.

### Balloon Pop

Employees donate prizes for this event—a variation of traditional raffle. Before filling a balloon with helium, put a note inside with the name of the prize. Employees pay \$ to buy a balloon and pop it to find out what prize they’ve won.

### Back to School

Relive the glory years of school (without all the homework). Collect school supplies for a United Way agency partner. Hold a spelling bee with managers versus employees or men verses women or department verses department etc. Contestants must spell the word correctly or everyone on the team must pay. The winning team wins a prize. Or email United Way pop quizzes to employees with winners receiving a prize. Give away customized lunchboxes.





**Bingo**

Sell bingo cards for employees to purchase. Get donated prizes for winners.

**“Blue Light Special” Rallies**

Hold daily/weekly “Blue Light Special” rallies throughout your employee giving time. Different divisions, departments or project areas host each “Special.” A non-profit organization representative speaks for community services, which your employees support and have interest in . Schedule entertainment by a youth or elderly group. Organize prizes and games.



**Book/Video Sale**

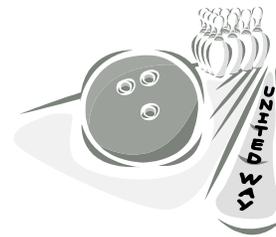
Employees donate old books, videos, CD’s and cassette tapes for an employee book sale. Sell paperbacks for \$1, hardbacks for \$2 and cassettes, CD’s and videos for up to \$5

**Board Game Contest**

Groups of employees compete around a chosen board game. They may move their piece for every returned pledge card, for every \$10 raised, for participation in Day of Caring, etc.

**Bowling for Dollars**

Recruit some teams and have a group bowling night, raising money via entry fees and per pin donations. Encourage fan support, fun and enthusiasm.



**Celebrity Car Wash**

Employees donate \$5 to have their car washed at a certain time by “Community Celebrities”.

**Chili Cook-off**

Employees cook their favorite chili recipe and enter it into a cook-off contest for a fee. Employees pay a fee for a voting card and all they chili they would dare to taste! Give out the “Hormel Chili Award to the winner”



### Coin War



Each department/floor for example has an empty container (a big one). Employees drop their spare dimes, nickels and pennies into the container. These coins are counted as positive. Quarters and dollar bills count as a negative. Employees may “sabotage” another department’s container by dropping in quarters or bills into their container. At the end of the campaign, both positive and negative monies are counted, and the group with the most \$\$\$ wins.

### Comedy Hour

Local comedians amuse employees during the lunch hour. (Pro Bono, of course) Employees buy tickets to attend.



### Community Fairs

Non-profit organizations set up information booths at your work site.

- Everyone loves a carnival!
  - Try a carnival theme with free hot dogs, soda and popcorn. Employees try their luck at games like ring toss and the fishpond. Include entertainment and art displays from youth projects.
- Publicize well
  - Strong leadership sets the pace. Ask your leaders to send a memo or email emphasizing the importance of learning about our community.
- Don’t leave without your passport!
  - Non-profit organization representatives provide employees with information to complete questions on the passport. Enter all completed passports into a grand prize drawing.



### Competitions

Run competitions based on donations or participation. Floors, departments, work groups, etc. can be organized into teams. Have a prize for the winning group.

### Corporate Challenge

Take on another company in your field in a campaign goal challenge.

### Craft and Bake Sale

Employees jump into the holidays by shopping at a craft and bake sale! This popular activity gives everyone a chance to share their hobbies and special talents.



**Cubicle Decorating Contest**

Use a theme like “Everything Elvis”. Or follow the “Trading Spaces” model where employees get to decorate each other’s cubicle. Have an entry fee and prizes.



**Dunk the Boss**

Rent a dunk tank and allow anyone who has made his or her pledge to throw at the boss. Contestants get one ball for getting the pledge in, two balls for increasing the pledge, three balls for pledging an hour a month. In lieu of the dunk tank use wet sponges in the cafeteria.

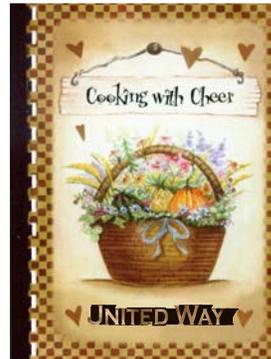


**Early Bird Gets the Worm**

Reward donors who turn in their pledge forms early. Place a balloon on their desk (weighed down with candy kisses or life savers with a note of thanks. This will encourage employees to turn in their pledge form early while recognizing individuals who have already given.

**Employee Cookbook**

Collect and group recipes and helpful household hints into a customized cookbook. Employees children create illustrations for the cookbook. Print or copy and bind books. This event is very popular. Plan for an enthusiastic response!



**Employee Raffle**

Ask employees to contribute something special for a raffle prize: Homemade pies, lunch with a co-worker, Car wash, tickets to a special event, on-day vacation or time off, donated prizes, weekend stay at a vacation cabin or condominium.

**Executive Chair Race**

Set up a relay course for executives to go through sitting in chairs or riding tricycles. Use a stopwatch to time contestants, with the best time winning a prize. Observers wager \$\$ on their favorite contestants.



**Jail and Bail**



Transform an office into a jail cell. Next, round up your prisoners. “Arrest” managers and executives and allow them to make telephone calls to their staff members to “bail” them out. All bail proceeds to United Way.

**Fear Factor Challenges**

Hold an employee or executive Fear Factor contest. Here’s one idea: The contestants race from point A to point B in scuba gear. At point B, supervisors have to find bubble gum in a bowl filled with whipped cream without using their hands. The first supervisor to blow a bubble wins.

**Garage Sale**

Have employees clean out their closets and set up a company wide garage sale to benefit United Way.

**Good Neighbor Barbeque**

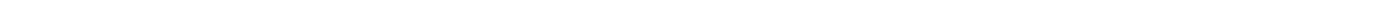
Join with other companies near your business to have a cookout with games and giveaways. Have a grantee speaker present or invite families from area agencies to partake in the festivities.



**Got Duct Tape?**



Have your CEO volunteer to be literally tapped to board for United Way at your end of campaign thank you event. Employees buy strips of duct tape to suspend CEO to a wall/board.



**Grandma’s Chocolate Cake**

Sell your grandma’s favorite chocolate cake recipe to interested employees. Tempt them first with little bite sized pieces for samples.

**Half and Half (50/50)**

Employees each donate money to be kept in a container until the end of the campaign. They can donate as many times as they would like... Especially when they see the container fill up. Hold a drawing from pledge cards where the employee receives half of the funds and United Way receives the other half.

**Halloween Pumpkin Carving Contest**

Plan a Halloween theme and hold a pumpkin carving contest. Employees enter carved pumpkins individually, charge \$5 to enter and \$1 per vote. Award prizes in various categories:

- Best traditional pumpkin
- Most creative pumpkin
- Best effort



**Health and Giving Events**

Each department in your organization hosts a special event that will raise money for the community and better the health of employees at the same time:

- Yoga classes (ask a trainer for pro bono class)
- Brown bag lunch workshops put on by service providers on such topics as child care, women’s health, parenting etc.
- Stress reduction class
- Personal trainer consultations (ask a trainer for pro bono class)
- Horoscopes

Charge a fee to attend the class per person

**Indy 500**

Rent or borrow remote controlled cars. Set up a racetrack course using office supplies to make it interesting. Give out trophies.



**International Food Day**

Employees team together to create taste treats from around the world. Employees decorate their own booths and dress in appropriate

**Karaoke Party**

This has the potential of being a BIG fundraiser and a GREAT team builder! Participants pay \$2 to enter and are given a list of songs and a pledge sheet in advance. Participants ask employees to support them by pledging and amount of money. At the event, have a big box of funny hats, boas and other costume items available for participants to use. Pass the hat at the party to receive even more pledges! NOTE: A variation on this activity is “Executive Karaoke.” Employees pay money for executives to get up and sign the song of their choice. Videotape the event and sell copies as well.



**Kickball/Softball/Basketball Challenge**

Employees compete! This can be a fun morale-booster. You decide whether to charge a fee. Involve other organizations. Compete against each other.

**Loose Change Contest**

Have selected “volunteers” write down a personal activity that they would do for a day at the end of the campaign. (Example: shave their head, dress up as a leprechaun, eat worms etc). Throughout the campaign employees would put their loose change into their jar of choice. Whoever had the most money in their jar had to perform their activity of their choice.



**Lunch Auction**

Different departments donate lunches to auction every day for a week. Use your organization’s intercom system, email or other communication system to temptingly auction the lunches. Employees call in with their bids. A variation of this event is to have employees pay \$5 for the boss to deliver coffee and muffins to them.

**Miniature Golf**

Build a 9-hole course featuring slinky’s, ramps, water and sand traps around the office laid out to test the skills of your employees. The lowest score will take home a tacky golfing sport coat. Interested twosomes return an entry form, bring a putter the day of the event and pay an appropriate entry fee:

- \$25 for twosomes of upper management
- \$15 for twosomes of middle management
- \$10 for twosomes of all other staff

Try a “Golfing in America” theme with each hole highlighting a different state or city (e.g., a hole in one in a Hawaiian volcano, sand traps in Arizona).



**Prize Drawings**

Employees who turn in their pledge card by a certain time are eligible to win prizes! Vendors who work with your organization will often donate prizes. Be creative!

*Random Pledge Card Prizes*

Offer wacky prizes for the fourteenth pledge card turned in, the neatest handwriting on a pledge card, the first pledge card turned in, the messiest etc.

**Pucker up Pig**

For a set donation amount, employees can cast votes for the co-worker who will “kiss the pig” at the end of the campaign. This will work with any other animal.

**Take a Day Off for United Way**

Employees “buy” a vacation day. When employees choose to participate, their wages from the day’s work are deducted from their paycheck. The organization may choose to match the amount deducted, with all proceeds donated to the campaign. This is a win-win situation: the organization achieves high participation, the employees get a vacation day and the community is helped.

**Ticket Giveaways**

Free tickets for movies, theater productions, amusement centers and other local attractions can be a pledge incentive. Encourage employees to pledge \$2 per week by giving two movie passes to every employee who meets that challenge.

**Valet Parking**

Have management park employee cars and retrieve them at the end of the day. Prizes can be awarded for giving levels.

**Wine Tasting**

Hold a wine tasting and select five wines to be rated. All employees and their spouses/guests in attendance are given rating sheets. Special drawings are also held for contributors to United Way. The larger the contribution, the more chances for a prize.

**White Elephant Sale**

It’s a sure bet that all of your employees have “white elephant” gifts they might be willing to donate for a fundraising sale. Price the items to move. Offer employees an incentive to bring in items: give them a raffle ticket for a prize drawing for each item they donate.



## Incentives

### *Where do I get incentives?*

- Big vendors that your company uses.
- Travel Companies
- Budget for incentives when budgeting for campaign
- Contact local merchants
- Use things your campaign can offer (days off, company store items, parking spaces, etc.)
- Use 50/50 drawing to raise \$\$ for incentives.

### *How do I use incentives?*

- Increase participation
- Increase average gift
- Get pledge cards in on time
- Encourage attendance at campaign meetings
- Get volunteers to help with campaign
- Friendly competition among departments

### Need an Idea for an Incentive?

- Bonus vacation days
- Gift certificates donated by local merchants
- Golf lessons
- Mugs, t-shirts, key chains, etc.
- One share of company stock
- Movie passes
- Sleep-in-late OR Leave-work-early certificates
- Traveling trophy for department with highest participation or percentage increase
- Casual days
- Job swap
- Flowers every week for a month or every month for a year
- Department pizza party
- Candy
- Prime parking spaces or free parking
- Day off to volunteer
- Massage
- Cafeteria coupons
- Homemade craft or cooking donated by employees
- Buttons/pins
- Lunch or dinner with CEO
- Gift baskets or goodie bags
- Early dismissal on a Friday
- Employee designed t-shirts
- A trip (using company frequent flyer miles)
- Open soda machine if company reaches goal
- Lottery Tickets
- Limo ride to and from work for a week
- Use of company car for a week/month/year
- A hot air balloon ride or sail plane ride
- Framed artwork
- Phone cards
- Sandwiches once a month delivered to work
- Day off on Birthday
- Cookie jar filled each week with cookies

## Lastly, but most importantly, say THANK YOU!

Saying thank you is the most important part of the campaign. It can be said in a variety of ways including:

- Displaying a giant thank you card
- Place Thank You posters throughout the building
- Publish a special Thank You newsletter
- Hold a Thank You event such as an ice cream social, free luncheon, etc.
- Send a voice mail or email expressing gratitude
- Appreciation grams: use gimmicks to say thanks throughout the year. Use holidays to remind contributors that they helped people.
  - Hearts on Valentine’s Day, Jelly beans at Easter, Candy Corn at Thanksgiving, Hero stickers for July 4th, etc.
- Hold a thank you pancake breakfast
- Make vending machines free for a day
- Feature the campaign committee in a company newsletter
- Send a personal thank you letter from CEO to all employees




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### ***Sample Thank You E-mails to your co-workers***

- *Thank you for investing in **what matters**, your community. Your gift to United Way will help **change lives!***
  - *Thank you for making a difference in our community by investing in United Way.*
  - *Thank you for investing in United Way. Your gift will help change lives and shape communities!*
  - *Your investment in United Way will help respond to basic needs, help develop prevention programs, and help create lasting change in Chemung and Steuben Counties.*
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## Tubing for Dollars...



for United Way!!



[www.uwst.org](http://www.uwst.org)